

# Retort approval proposed with restrictions

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Express Editor

The Uintah County Planning Commission will recommend to the Uintah County Commission that an oil shale retort in the Bonanza area receive a conditional use permit, but it must meet all state and federal permitting requirements first.

The oil shale retort was moved to its present location on State School Trust Lands in Cowboy Canyon about 17 miles southeast of Vernal.

"The Planning Commission unanimously approved the experimental oil retort, but attached a number of conditions," said Wes Baden, Uintah County Planning Commission chairman.

Because the request was in a zone which allows oil shale only as a conditional use, the Planning Commission can only make a recommendation to the Uintah County Commissioners who will make the final decision.

Recommended conditions for the conditional use permit include:

- The company submits proof that it has all the necessary permits and applications.

- That approval is limited to one acre for experimental purposes only with no mining.

- The approval would be for surface occupancy only. Once Oil Tech Inc. is through with the project and their permits expire, the property will revert back to the state.

"No permission has been granted by SITLA for occupancy of the property," said Dave Ebbertson, School and Institution Trust Lands.

"The project is in trespass which needs to be resolved," Ebbertson said.

Possible ways in which the trespass could be resolved include shutting the retort down or paying of a fine.

"After resolving the trespass issue, they still need to jump through all the hoops," Ebbertson said.

The earliest the issue could be heard by the Uintah County Commission is April 8, but Baden said there is no way the company can meet all the conditions in that short a period.

Jack Savage, president of Oil Tech Inc., said that he had met with state officials on many occasions and they didn't seem to have a problem with what was being proposed.

The oil shale retort had been operated in Vernal City and at the White River Oil Shale site before being moved to Cowboy Canyon. The company experimented with the retort at the White River site during a temporary use permit from the BLM. Once the permitting period expired, the BLM did not renew the permit.

## Arrest to drug

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